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CHARON;

OR, THE

FERRY-BOAT.

A

VISION.

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OR, THE

FERRY-BOAT.

A

VISION.

Dedicated to the

Swiss COUNT—

Cura non ipsa in Morte relinquunt. Virg.

L O N D O N,

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CHARON

OF THE

FERRY-BOT

A

V I O N



Dedicated to the

Staff Count

Count of the Staff

LONDON

Printed by J. G. & J. H. Smith, 10, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.



TO THE
Swiss COUNT—

S I R,

I *T would be lessening a
Man of your Fame,
not to imagine you suf-
ficiently known by the
Title, which, by the Courtesy of
England, you have long enjoy'd,
and which therefore needs not the
Addition of your Name. But not*

Epistle Dedicatory.

*to lose time in Ceremony, I hasten
to give you and the Reader some
Reasons for this Dedication.*

*It is a Piece of Craft often
practis'd among Authors, when
they are about to Publish some
Trifle which they suspect may lie
too quietly in the Bookseller's
Shop, to help it off by the
Choice of a Patron, whose Name
and Character may be a Means
to make it spread. It is for this
Reason, and knowing that you go
into a great deal of Company, that
I have taken the Liberty (for which
I beg your Pardon) of pinning
this Paper to your Sleeve. If I
had Interest enough in you to get
you to recommend it to all your
Friends, Customers and Subscribers,
it might, for ought I know, reach
almost all Christian People whom
these Presents may concern. No
one*

Epistle Dedicatory.

one perhaps of this Age has had so great a Hand as your self in furnishing out many of the Wares, which Persons in the Circumstances of those represented in the following Vision are the most loath to part with. It is now, I think, for some Years, that you have been chief Proveditor of Diversions and Amusements for the Service of the Inhabitants of this Island, some of which you have imported from Abroad, and others you have varied and embellish'd with so extensive and skilful a Genius, that it is no wonder that most who have had a Taste of them are so very unwilling to remove from hence, or to leave 'em behind. I hope it will not be thought inferior to your Character, if I shou'd call you a sort of a Property-Man to the great Stage of the World. Those who are acquainted with the Inside of the Play-house
know,

Epistle Dedicatory.

know, that there is a certain Officer with that Title, who has in his keeping a whole Ware-house of all the Toys and Trinkets made use of by the Players upon the Theatre, and gives them out, and takes them back, as there is occasion. I had once therefore thought of assigning you a Station in the following Vision near Mercury, where, as the Dead were stripp'd, you might have had an Opportunity of stopping whatever belong'd to your Office, and have taken to your own Goods again: But I consider'd how full your Hands are of Business, and how ill a Person of your Importance cou'd be spar'd.

With these and the like Thoughts in my Head, and a Proof-Sheet of the following Papers in my Hand, which had been just brought me from the Press, I happen'd to fall asleep,

Epistle Dedicatory.

asleep, and had a very whimsical Dream; which, because it concerns You, and at the same time is a sort of an Appendix to the Vision I am presenting to you, I beg leave to relate here in the Dedication. Methought you were very Gay one Night over a Bottle of Champaign at the Blue Posts in your Neighbourhood; and being somewhat elevated by your late Successes, and wisely thinking at the same time how to provide for the future, you fell into a new Project, to which you were encourag'd by a certain Poet of your Acquaintance, then in your Company, who undertook to sell you some Acres of Ground to build upon in the Elysian Fields. You had very prudently consider'd, that vast Numbers of People who are travelling towards the Regions below, wou'd probably be at a Loss, when they come thither, how to spend
B their

Epistle Dedicatory.

their Time. Your Design therefore was to erect a large Square of Buildings for all such sort of Entertainments and Diversions, as are usual at Carnivals, and to call it by the Name of H——d——r's FOLLY. You procur'd, in the first Place, a large Subscription to be paid you down in ready Money, and then with a choice Colony of Fidlers, Dancers, Tumblers, Carpenters, Scene-Painters, and the like; and many Waggon Loads of painted Cloth, Machines, rich Furniture, Variety of the newest Habits, and other valuable Curiosities, you set forward on the Road towards your intended new Plantation. But, alas, the hard Fate of Projectors! Before you came half way to the Place, a sudden Storm of Wind arose, over-turn'd and disfurnish'd your Waggon in a Moment, and as if they had been loaden only with Chaff

Epistle Dedicatory.

*Chaff or Feathers, whirl'd away
their whole Contents over a vast Va-
cuity, into the Limbo describ'd by
Milton in the Third Book of his
Paradise Lost. I was so struck with
Concern for you and your good Com-
pany, that I wak'd in a Fright,
and was glad to find by the Adver-
tisement inserted in the Daily Cou-
rant, of the next Ball to be in the
Hay-market, that you were proba-
bly at that time in good Health,
and in no such great Haste to be
gone from Us.*

*But to draw to an End. I have
heard of a pleasant Fellow who had
an Affair depending in the Reign
of King Charles the Second, and
humorously made a Request to the
Duke of Buckingham, who was
then in great Favour and Popula-
rity, that his Grace wou'd only be
pleas'd to let him stop him the next*

Epistle Dedicatory.

Day, when his Business was to come on, in some very Publick Place, and give the Petitioner leave to hold him in a seeming Whisper for two Minutes, amongst a Crowd of Observers. This Artifice alone did more than several Months soliciting, and his Affair succeeded to his Wish. I have used the same Stratagem with you, in hopes of the like Success; and therefore thanking you now for your Ear, and for the Honour I have taken to myself, of an Acquaintance I never had with you before, I release you from any further Trouble, and am (tho' still unknown)



S I R,

Your oblig'd humble Servant.



CHARRON:

OR, THE

FERRY-BOAT.

A.

VISION.



UCIAN, in one of his Dialogues, has very Satyrically expos'd, after his pleasant manner of Ridicule, the odd Perplexity and Distress of foolish Mortals, in finding themselves stripp'd by Death of all their darling Vanities and Amusements,

ments, and being oblig'd to pass naked into the other World, and to leave behind them whatever they most priz'd upon Earth. As this Thought contains a very instructive Moral, and is capable of being drawn out into a Variety of Invention, it may be worth the while to pursue it, after a different manner, and without being confin'd to the Plan or particular Sentiments of that Author.

Every one may observe, upon reading any Story, or Description, which strikes his Mind in a very lively manner, that the Imagination exercises for a while a sort of *Visionary Power*, and we even fancy we view the Scene, and see before us the Objects describ'd. It was so with me, after I had read the Dialogue above-mention'd. Methought I saw the River *Styx*, and *Charon* with his Ferry-

ry-Boat, transporting the Souls into the other World. Vast Numbers of the Deceas'd stood upon the hither-most Shore, and every one had something or other, which he had brought with him, of the Goods he most valued in Life. The Crowd and Hurry occasion'd a great Disorder. *Charon* was in a Passion, cursing, sweating and toiling, and sometimes laying about him with his Pole, to keep off Numbers that wou'd have press'd irregularly into his Boat. I heard all at once a wild Confusion of Voices, but *Charon's* was much the loudest——What, will you never be warn'd? Ridiculous Mortals! And don't you see how crazy my Boat is, after having been work'd for so many Ages? Hola! keep back there——you Fellows, are you mad? So——we shall be at the Bottom of the River presently, and I suppose you can't all swim. Here's
fine

fine Work ! What, none but Fools coming from the World above ? And pray what's all this Bag and Baggage for, when you know, or shou'd know, the Law of the Place, that no Mortal is to transport any earthly Thing besides himself ? How ?—— What's that you say ?—— Pay for it ? Why you Puppies, it cannot be—— and do you think I'm to be brib'd like your selves, or will take more than my Fare ? Bless me, what's here ? What a Crowd of Women are coming yonder, and what Loads do I see of Trunks, Boxes and Bundles ? I'll sink my Boat, I shall never stand it, 'tis impossible to answer 'em all ! O *Jupiter*, *Jupiter* ! These People will distract me !

The Noise was so great that *Jupiter* heard it, and knowing the Cause, dispatch'd *Mercury* in a Moment, with Orders to perform his
Part

The FERRY-BOAT. 5

Part of a Herald to keep the Peace, and see the Orders of the Place observ'd. *Mercury* accordingly shot himself down from Heaven, swift as a Sun-beam, and with his Rod of Authority in his Hand, planted himself on the side of the River, and calling out to *Charon* bid him be of good Courage; for *Jupiter* had sent him to his Assistance, with Instructions to search all Persons whatsoever, as they came down to the Ferry, and that he wou'd take care to see them fairly stripp'd, before they shou'd be suffer'd to set one Foot in the Boat.

The Crowd in the mean time increas'd, for it happen'd to be just after a very sickly Season, which had swept away great Numbers of People. The first that press'd to the Boat, after *Mercury* had taken his Station, was an eminent Physician;

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but

but he was soon stopp'd, and told that he must part with his Doctor's Gown. He was very loath to comply, and told *Mercury* that all his Learning was in it, and that he was nothing without it. I believe it, says *Mercury*; and pulling it off, found it quilted with the Fees he had receiv'd in his Practice. He begg'd hard for it again, said he had been a good Friend to *Charon* in his Time, as many that had been lately transported cou'd testify, and he thought it hard to be us'd in such a manner. All that he urg'd avail'd him nothing; he was thrust into the Boat among the illiterate Croud, who shew'd him not the least Mark of Respect or Distinction.

The next that I observ'd, after this grave Person, was a gay young Fellow, with a fluttering Air, a Mask on his Face, and drest in a Habit of
Fea-

Feathers, like an *American* Prince. He came forward as if he were dancing a Minuet. By his Gait and Motion it appear'd that he was very little prepar'd for his new State, and he look'd as if he brought all the Follies and Vanities of Life along with him. *Mercury* observ'd him, and let him pass on to the Boat-side, where holding up to *Charon* a Ticket, instead of a Half-penny, he demanded Admittance. He seem'd surpriz'd upon *Charon's* refusing the Ticket, and said he had receiv'd it from *Heidegger* but a Week before. *Mercury* by this time had laid hold of him, and began to pluck off his Feathers, and uncase him, like a Fowl at the Poulterer's. He shrunk very much under the Operation, seem'd much concern'd upon being told there were no Masquerades in the other World, and as soon as his Habit was pluck'd off, I lost sight of him

C 2

him on a sudden, and cou'd not discover what became of him afterwards.

What! nothing but Masqueraders? cry'd *Mercury*, with an angry Voice, seeing great Crowds of Dead advance towards the side of the River; off with your Disguises, ye silly Wretches, and know they can now stand you in stead no longer. You Sir, do you think to pass here with that huge Cloak of Devotion? You, Madam, be pleas'd to lay by your demure Looks, and affected Modesty; You, fair Lady, your false Charms; and You, my grave Friend, your outside Wisdom. So.—lay them all in a Heap there. What a fine Wardrobe were this to furnish a Play-house?—As *Mercury* was proceeding in his Business, I was concern'd to see the surprizing Change that many goodly Personages underwent, upon plucking
ing

ing off their Habits. Heroes degraded into Butchers and Bravoës. Patriots into Thieves and Robbers. Women of the most consummate Beauty into worse Shapes than those of *Scylla* and *Charibdis*. Holy Men into Prize-Fighters, Furies and Dæmons. Hermits into the hideous Figures of Goats and Satyrs; and Philosophers into Monkeys, Mules and Mill-Horses. The Heap of Habits swell'd to a prodigious Bulk. I saw among them great Variety of Vizor-Masques, false Eye-brows, artificial Looks, forc'd Smiles, and painted Complexions; and cou'd not but particularly observe two large Garments which had a very fair Outside, and were distinguish'd from all the rest, on one of which was embroider'd in Golden Characters ZEAL FOR THE CHURCH, and on the other PUBLICK SPIRIT. But upon *Mercury's* touching

ing them with his Wand, the Gold tarnish'd, and the Titles were suddenly chang'd; and instead of the first there appear'd in large Capital Letters the Word PERSECUTION, and in the room of the latter PENSIONS, PLACES AND PRIVATE GAIN.

After the first Hurry of the Crowd was a little abated, there stepp'd forward, with a slow and solemn Pace, a very venerable Person in a long Gown, with a Beard that reach'd almost down to his middle, and gave his Face such an Air of Dignity, that I cou'd not think him inferior to *Socrates* himself, especially when I heard him, upon *Mercury's* questioning him, make answer that he was a Philosopher.—Very well, reply'd *Mercury*—your Wisdom is welcome—but be pleas'd then to leave that long Gown and that immeasurable

ble Beard behind you. With some Difficulty he was prevail'd upon to put off his Gown ; but his Beard, he said, was a part of his Person, and ought not to be separated from it. *Mercury* told him he must use no Tricks here, that his Beard was a Cheat, and tho' he had made use of it in the World to pass unknown, he must now appear what he really was, and shou'd keep it on no longer. At those Words he gave it a gentle Touch with his *Caduceus*, when in an Instant off dropp'd the Philosopher. The Man star'd with Surprise, and that very Countenance which before appear'd even wiser than *Minerva* her self, now bore the exact Similitude of her Bird. There arose a loud Fit of Laughter among the Crowd at this sudden Transformation, upon which he clapp'd both his Hands before his Face, and got out of sight as fast as he cou'd.

What's

What's here? says *Mercury*, seeing another Mortal advance, with a Beard as large as the former, but with a more pleasant Air in his Countenance; are you a Philosopher too? No Sir, says the Man smiling, I am ready to part with my Beard when you please; I have done with it——Fare it well. It has earn'd me many a merry Crown in my Time——Why, what wer't thou then?——A Beggar, an't please you; I was brought up to it; 'twas my Trade. Sir, I have been Sick, Lame, Crooked and Blind, as Occasion serv'd, for above these threescore Years. I began to be a decrepit old Man at Five and twenty, and have been coughing and limping upon Crutches hither ever since. My Beard as I said——(ay, you may take it off——) has been a good Friend to me, and has often procur'd me
the

the Charity of well-dispos'd People, who wou'd never have pitied a smooth Chin and a wholesome Complexion. Besides, I used to let out that and my Face to the Painters of my Time for their History Pictures. You talk of your Philosophers! I have been a *Socrates*, a *Plato*, a *Seneca*, and all by turns, and sometimes a *Diogenes* in his Tub. But the last I fate to, was a Rogue of a Sign-Painter, who said he wou'd restore me to my own Profession, and so turn'd me into the *Blind Beggar of Bednal-Green*.——'Tis very well, says *Mercury*, I see your Equipage there. You must leave your Bundle of Rags, your Wooden Leg, your Night-Caps and your Plaisters your tatter'd Cloaths and your Poverty, with that Philosopher's Beard there, and false Wisdom. With all my Heart, says the Fellow, I desire to carry nothing with me——But hark

D

ye,

ye, Boatman, have you never a Dram?—*Charon* look'd very furly at him, and answer'd, No—Why then, says the Fellow, I never was poor 'till now; and shrugging his Shoulders, fetch'd a deep Sigh, and pass'd on into the Boat among the rest.

The next that appear'd had such a haughty frowning Countenance, and cast around him such scornful Looks on the rest of the Dead, as if he were angry at his own Mortality, and asham'd to find himself mingled on a sudden, in such mean and contemptible Company; as he advanc'd he call'd out to *Mercury*, and desir'd him to keep off the Crowd, and take Care he might be receiv'd in a Manner suitable to his Quality. —Your Quality, Sir? said *Mercury*—Yes, he reply'd; by your Office as a Herald, you cannot but know

know what is due to one of my Rank; however, for your particular Satisfaction, be pleas'd to look on this Parchment Roll. *Mercury* took it from him, and opening it, found it was a Genealogical Tree of his Family, finely drawn out into a Variety of beautiful Branches, and embellish'd with Gold. Very well! and this is then the Treasure you have chiefly valu'd upon Earth, which you have so carefully preserv'd, and have thought fit to bring with you hither? I know you now, Sir, and will do you Justice. I see here the Names of many Noble Persons, your Ancestors, some of whom have been an Honour to their Age and Country. But pray what have you your self done that deserves any Regard or Distinction? It is time to strip you of Merit not your own. Be pleas'd to follow the Beggar there, who is just gone before you, and

know, that among the Dead the meanest Person whom you have not excell'd in Virtue, is your Equal in Rank and Quality. At those Words he threw the Parchment into the River, and turning hastily away, left the Gentleman to shift for himself, and to take what Place in the Ferry he cou'd get.

Tho' the greatest Strictness was used in searching all that approach'd the River, and none were suffer'd to pass till they were quite stripp'd, yet every one had the Folly to dispute it, and was still trying to save something; and it was observable that they most contended for Trifles, and Things that cou'd be of no Use to 'em in the Place to which they were going. A Snuff-Box, a Pocket-Glass, a Tooth-Pick-Case, and a Pack of Picquet-Cards were often the last things given up by the fine Gentlemen.

men. A rough Fox hunter, that was arriv'd fresh from a Leap over a fix-barr-Gate, by which he had broke his Neck, made a great Noise upon their laying hold of him to pull off his Jockey Boots. He was follow'd by a profess'd Gamester, who had been kill'd in a Duel; this Fellow, after having thrown away the Box and Dice angrily, as if he had just then had an ill Run at Play, pass'd on with a seeming Scorn to be question'd. But *Mercury* stepping after him, and opening the Palm of his Right Hand, found he had cogg'd a Die; he ask'd him what he meant by it? His Answer was—Nothing, but it was a Habit he had got, and he cou'd not leave it off. Many Words pass'd, on these and the like Disputes; and *Mercury*, tho' the God of Eloquence, found all his Art little enough to satisfy the Ladies, whom he was unwilling to treat too roughly.

roughly. One, with an heroick Resolution, declar'd there were few Goods in Life she cou'd not readily part with, and only desir'd Leave to transport her Tea Equipage. Some begg'd hard for their Favourite Lap-Dogs, some for their Sets of Dressing Plate; one for a Tweezer Case, another for an *Ovid's* Epistles, and another for a Bottle of *Sal Volatile*. In the midst of all this Bustle, there was one Incident ridiculous enough. A Lady who had staid for some time, and seen the Fate of the rest, thought she wou'd very submissively prepare for her Voyage, and therefore quitting a huge Wardrobe she had brought with her, and stripping herself of her Jewels, and of a very fine Brocade Gown which she had worn at a Ball at Court, where she caught the Cold of which she dy'd, desir'd leave only to be transported in her Hoop-Petticoat. But *Charon* call'd out to *Mercury*,

cury, and said it wou'd fill his Boat, and there wou'd be no room for any other Passengers. Upon this she drew a String, and very dextrously slipp'd off her Hoop, and coiling it up into as narrow a Circle as she cou'd, clapp'd it under her Arm. The whole Crowd rais'd a Laugh at the Expedient, but it prov'd unsuccessful——for *Mercury* told her she must be content to leave both her Hoop and her Petticoat. She was forc'd to submit. I kept my Eye on her for some time, but the Moment she was stripp'd, she took up so little room, that she seem'd to vanish into nothing.

After this a Gentleman, with an Air of Importance, thrust forward, and demanded his Passage. Hold, Sir, says *Mercury*, you have a sort of a Treasury Face, I think I shou'd know you. Ay——'tis he——why
you

you were Mr. *Such-a-One*—of the *What d'ye call it* Office! and pray what have you done with all the fair Sums of which you thought fit to disburthen the Government?—You wrong me, Sir, replies the Man; you see I have nothing but this poor Piece of Copper to pay my Passage. At the same time he held up his Half-penny between his Finger and Thumb with a steddly Assurance. *Charon* was going to take him in; but *Mercury* call'd after him again. Not so fast, I, beseech you—why what! don't I who am the God of Theft, know a Thief? At these Words *Mercury* snatch'd from him a small parcel of Papers which he had roll'd up, and almost hid in his Hand. They prov'd to be Bank-Bills, to the value of above a hundred thousand Pound. 'Tis very well, Sir,—you may go on now, if you please. Nay, what do you linger and look back for? I tell

tell you these will not pass in the Country, to which you are bound. Fare you well. I will take care to convey them back to your Executors, who shall send them to the Treasury, with a Letter That a certain nameless Person, being touch'd in Conscience, that he cou'd not cheat the Publick any longer, has thought fit at his Death to make them this Restitution.

As it was plain that most who advanc'd to the River side shew'd great Unwillingness in parting with the Goods of Life, I cou'd not but take the more Notice of one Person, who with a stern Countenance, and an Air of uncommon Resolution, came naked towards the Ferry, and seem'd resolv'd to save *Mercury* the trouble of stripping him. As he advanc'd he cast a scornful Look backward over his Shoulder, and
E cry'd

cry'd out, World Farewel ! And all thy Poms, Pleasures and Vanities ! How just is it that proud and mistaken Mortals shou'd find themselves stripp'd in Death of all those empty Trifles, in which they falsly placed their Happiness ? Adieu ye gay gild-ed Nothings ! Wealth and Power, Mirth and Festivals, Greatness and Luxury, Crowds, Noise, Triumphs and Fame, adieu ! I renounce ye all, nor do I think ye worth one Sigh at parting. He was going on in this Philosophick Strain, when *Mercury* laid hold of him ; Pray, who are you Friend ?——Oh, you are *Misanthropos* the slovenly *Cynick*, who liv'd a Savage, and dy'd a Beggar ; whilst you were in the World above, you thought to make your Ill Manners pass for Wisdom, and your Spleen for Philosophy ; and do you now make a Merit of renouncing Pleasures of which you never were pos-

possess'd ? Riches, which you never cou'd gain ? and Greatness, you never cou'd attain to ? Come, come, the Cheat will not pass here—as naked as you seem, I shall yet strip you of certain Garments, which I see stick as close to you as your Skin. Be pleas'd then to leave behind you your Hatred of your own Species, your Scorn of your Superiors, your Envy at the Prosperity of others, your Censoriousness and everlasting Snarling —Lay by too that inward Pride of Heart, which makes you fond of an affected and absurd Singularity, and Vain even of your pretended Humility. So —now you may pass with the rest.—The *Cynick* mov'd on with a mortified Countenance, and had not one Word to say by way of Answer.

Charon had now taken in about as many as his Boat wou'd conve-

niently carry at a time, and was going to put off from the Shore, when *Mercury* call'd to him to stay for one Passenger more. At the same time there came forward a Person with so much Lustre in his Countenance, Vigour in his Motion, and Gracefulness in his whole Figure, as if Death, instead of robbing him of his natural Strength and Beauty, had encreas'd both. As he pass'd by, all who look'd on him were struck with a sudden Veneration. But what was most extraordinary was, that by his Habit he seem'd drest for a Triumphal Entry, and bore in his Looks an Air of Joy, as after some Victory. His Brows were encircled with a Diadem of Gold. He was cloath'd in a Vest of white Ermin, and wore over it a loose azure Robe, embroider'd with Stars. *Mercury* advanc'd to meet him, and with all the Marks of Respect usher'd him to the Ferry,
into

into which he pass'd, cloath'd as he was, and took his Place. Every one was surpriz'd that a Law which had hitherto been so rigorously executed, shou'd be dispens'd with in his Favour; and that *Charon*, who was so careful not to charge his Boat with any superfluous Weight, shou'd be content to take him in, before he had put off his Habit and Ornaments. The Crowd that remain'd on the Shore began to murmur at this Partiality, when *Mercury* spoke out aloud——I see your Astonishment——You all wonder why this venerable Person is suffer'd to pass into the Boat, without being stripp'd like others. But know, he has carried nothing with him which can be taken from him. His Garments are not the Weeds of Vice and Vanities; nor his Ornaments of a Mortal Nature. His Crown which has the Appearance of Gold, yet is exceed-

ceedingly more valuable, is the Approbation of the Gods, and of good Men, for a Life spent in the exerting of many Publick and Private Virtues. His Under-Garment is the Vest of Integrity; and his upper One, which you see is azure and sprinkled with Stars, is the Robe of Immortal Honour. It resembles the Heavens, and like the Heavens is unperishable. Whilst Kings are here forc'd to lay down their Crowns and Scepters, and Conquerors their wither'd Laurels; whilst the Rich are divorc'd from their useles Heaps, and all Mortals stripp'd of their darling Pleasures and Delights; these are Goods which cannot be taken from the Possessor, even in Death it self.

F I N I S.